

SLAVERY AND FAMINE,

PUNISHMENTS FOR SEDITION;

OR,

AN ACCOUNT

OF

NEW SOUTH WALES,

AND OF THE

MISERABLE STATE OF THE CONVICTS,

By GEORGE THOMPSON,

Who failed in the ROYAL ADMIRAL, May, 1792.

WITH SOME

PRELIMINARY REMARKS.

AND

A SKETCH OF THE CHARACTER OF

THOMAS FYSCH PALMER, B. D. late Senior Fellow
of Queen's College, Cambridge.

By GEORGE DYER,

AUTHOR OF THE COMPLAINTS OF THE POOR PEOPLE
OF ENGLAND.

SECOND EDITION.

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TO THE

SECOND EDITION.

IT is my intention to pay a tribute of respect, more at large, elsewhere, to the other gentlemen, Muir, Margarot, Skirving, Sinclair, and Gerald, who have been convicted of Sedition. But my present engagements did not leave me sufficiently at leisure, to particularize what I meant to say of those sufferers. If this pamphlet should fall into the hands of any of their friends, I have to intreat them to impute my silence on the characters of those gentlemen to its true causes, viz. want of time, and want of information. For my part, I am not afraid to say, I feel great respect for them all, and I think them all alike entitled to the attention of the friends of liberty and humanity. To the insinuation thrown out in the House of Commons against Palmer, I think it

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TO THE
P E O P L E
CALLED
Q U A K E R S.

THOUGH I am unconnected with your societies, I have long been an admirer of your manners: though I may differ from you on some religious and political questions, I am charmed with your virtuous conduct. In these Preliminary Remarks will be found a simplicity in the use of names, which though in itself, natural, may be deemed, by many, romantic; and though coming from a child of peace, may even be thought to favour sedition. I address this little work to you: it is a tribute of esteem: I express respect for your example: I seek protection from your alliance.

Long before that æra, at which the artificial distinctions of society may date their insignificance, they were deemed worse than insignificant by me; they were deemed so by you. With respect to forms of government, indeed, some of us, perhaps, may differ. But shall it
be

be said, that the men, who thinks these artificial distinctions to be unnatural and injurious, must be necessarily republicans and levellers? William Penn was a friend to a limited monarchy. Shall it be said that those who adopt the maxims of brethren are mere copyists from others? When France was a nation of aristocrats and slaves, ye were a society of friends.

Continue, still to bear your faithful testimony. That example shall produce, nay, has already produced, more conviction than all the reasonings of pride. France, that has been the first to deride your theory, is become the first to imitate your practice. But do not hastily suppose, that you have gained the summit of wisdom. Your first teachers gave you, on some subjects, solid information: on others, I think they misled your judgment. What I deemed their mistakes, I have endeavoured to point out elsewhere, thinking it to be my duty, while acknowledging your merits, to discharge my obligations *, by exercising a liberty out of your societies, which would not have been allowed me within them.

* See the Fourth Part of an Inquiry into the Nature of Subscription to the Thirty-nine Articles.

London, 16. of the third month, 1794.

PRELIMINARY REMARKS.

AFTER so many circumstantial accounts of the settlements in New South Wales, the following short narrative may appear to some unnecessary, at least, if not impertinent. The design, therefore, of the publication of it, and the means by which it fell into my possession, together with some observations connected with the narrative, or arising from correlative circumstances, shall be laid before the readers: some indulgence may reasonably be expected, as my inquiries have arisen merely out of the spur of the occasion: method must give way to matters of fact, and elegance of language to accuracy of statement.

When my esteemed friend T. Fyfe Palmer was sent to the hulk at Woolwich, it was natural for me to pay him all the regards of friendship, and to feel an interest in his future fortunes; the same anxiety that I experienced for F. Palmer, I was soon led to feel for the amiable Thomas Muir; the same for the other worthy men, who are suffering alike in the cause of virtue, and equally entitled to the attention of their country.

Being one day on board the Staniflaus hulk, I heard the following narrative rehearsed; it immediately occurred to me that it should be made public; and I was afterwards pressed by some friends to undertake the publication myself—Little solicitation was necessary: I was happy to indulge at the same time the sympathies of friendship, and to obey the calls of humanity; and am now happy, after receiving information myself, to be enabled to gratify, at a small expence, the public curiosity. Having, therefore, obtained the
consent

consent of Thompson's wife to publish the narrative, and been commissioned by a bookseller to purchase of her the copy, I have no doubt of performing an agreeable service to many readers.

The virtues, the talents, the learning, of the gentlemen mentioned above, have called forth no small degree of the public notice ; and I wish my readers to know, that their patience and their fortitude are equal to their other virtues. The situation of persons thus circumstanced cannot be disgraceful, though it is certainly perilous ; they are shortly to be transported to a country, where the horrors of famine may press upon those of slavery. Such persons are entitled to something more than the public sympathy.

In the accounts given by different writers of these settlements, some considerable variations are apt to occur. Nothing is more common than to read in the books of voyagers descriptions some-

what different of the same people. It should not therefore surprize the most exact readers to perceive, that Thompson's narrative varies in some few particulars from that of others. Captain Hunter in his HISTORICAL ACCOUNT of PORT JACKSON, and NORFOLK ISLAND, speaks of the natives as a lively and ingenious people. Capt. Tench's description of them too is somewhat favourable in point of ingenuity. Thompson, on the other hand, speaks of them as exceedingly dull: the same character of dullness is also given them in the account of the VOYAGE of the ENDEAVOUR. Thompson, I would observe, did not stay long at Port Jackson; and it must be confessed that the character of a people cannot be ascertained from a hasty survey: in savages too, whose minds have admitted few ideas, whose conceptions so differ from our own, and whose manner of communicating them is so liable to mislead, precision is still more difficult. Captains Hunter and Tench have certainly been more conversant with the natives: and

and may probably, therefore, be more accurate in their relation on some subjects, than Thompson, or even Capt. Cook. But I cannot forbear observing, that Thompson's representation of the natives of New South Wales, with regard to intellect, is very consistent with their ordinary practice of excessive eating, even to surfeiting and sickness ; and with various particulars related by other voyagers. Their general character, too, as exhibited by Thompson, accords, in my opinion, with the circumstances related by Hunter and others, as does their disposition towards the new settlers : As to the condition of the convicts, I think it probable, that Thompson's account may be more accurate than any other. In short, Thompson appears to me an ingenious and sensible young man, many of his observations carry marks of originality ; I, at least, have not met with them in other journalists : and they evidently wear the appearance of truth. Wherever I have thought him mistaken, I have taken the liberty of adding a note ; especially,

especially, as he seems not to have read the Narratives of other voyagers*.

It will appear from the following account, compared with various particulars related by others, that the New Settlement does actually lie exposed to danger from famine. This will, therefore, be the principal object of my consideration, and I beg the reader's serious attention to the following references.—

* The Royal Admiral East Indiaman, in which Thompson was Gunner, carried out 301 males, and 40 female convicts. He had the charge of these, as also the care of the provisions, &c. Prefixed to his Narrative is a list of the Colonists, Soldiers, and Convicts, with the time of their conviction, &c. together with a list of the daily allowance of each mess, of six persons, and of the daily expenditure of convicts from May, 1792, when the Royal Admiral sailed from Portsmouth, to October, when it arrived at Port Jackson. His Journal discovers great attention, and I conclude him to be a very excellent seaman. He is at present Mate in a vessel that goes from St. Helena to Denmark, but would fill a superior station in the naval line with credit to himself, and with advantage to the public.

Captain

Captain Tench resided at Port Jackson almost four years, viz. from the 20th of January, 1788, to the 18th of September, 1791. In April, 1790, he observes as follows: "On the 17th instant, the Supply, Captain Ball, sailed for Batavia. We followed her with anxious eyes until she was no longer visible. Truly did we say to her, "*In te omnis domus inclinata recumbit.*" We were, however, consoled by reflecting, that every thing that zeal, fortitude, and seamanship, could produce, was concentrated in her Commander.

"Our bosoms consequently became less perturbed; and all our labour and attention were turned on one object—the procuring of food. Pride, pomp, and circumstances of glorious war were no more.

"The distress of the lower classes for clothes, was almost equal to their wants. The stores had been long exhausted, and winter was at hand. Nothing more ludicrous can be conceived than the expedient

ent of substituting, shifting, and patching, which ingenuity devised, to eke out wretchedness, and preserve the remains of decency. The superior dexterity of the women was particularly conspicuous. Many a guard have I seen mount, in which the number of soldiers without shoes, exceeded that which had yet preserved remnants of leather.

“ Nor was another part of our domestic economy less whimsical. If a lucky man, who had knocked down a dinner with his gun, or caught a fish by angling from the rocks, invited a neighbour to dine with him, the invitation always ran, “ Bring your own bread.” Even at the Governor’s table, this caution was constantly observed. Every man when he sat down pulled his bread out of his pocket, and laid it by his plate.”

I have myself heard, by a gentleman immediately connected with Governor Philip, that the Governor himself has sat
down

down to a scanty allowance. Captain Tench further observes, in a note, " Three or four instances of persons who perished from want, have been related to me. One only, however, fell within my own observation. I was passing the provision-store, when a man, with a wild haggard countenance, who had just received his daily pittance to carry home, came out. His faltering gait, and eager devouring eye, led me to watch him; and he had not proceeded ten steps before he fell. I ordered him to be carried to the hospital, where, when he arrived, he was found dead. On opening the body, the cause of death was pronounced to be *inanition*." It is in a high degree probable, nay, from various particulars to be collected from different Journals, certain, that many unhappy creatures must have perished from the same cause. Thompson's account of these matters is, I doubt not, in the main, true: the number, however, stated by him to have died in one year, through sickness, want of provision,

sion, hard labour, loathsome disease, or natural decay, may, probably, exceed matter of fact. I have, therefore, left it blank *, though I by no means think his relation improbable; apprehending, that his account includes the returns of all the different settlements I mean to compare, and to ascertain, at my leisure, as accurately as I can, the different statements and probabilities relative to this subject; but wish to leave it out of the power of any reader to say, that either Thompson or I have misled him; at present, the reasons for forwarding this work prevent an immediate investigation. Thompson does not mention the precise year of this calamitous event; it was probably near the time of the loss of the Sirius and Guardian frigate.

* He makes it amount even to 1300.

I shall

I shall now lay before my readers, from well known voyagers, various observations on the soil, &c. of the new settlements.— Captain Hunter in his HISTORICAL JOURNAL OF THE TRANSACTIONS AT PORT JACKSON AND NORFOLK ISLAND, observes as follows, (p. 77.)

“ As I have mentioned something of the country between Botany Bay and Port-Jackson, I must further observe, that in the neighbourhood of Sydney Cove, which is that part of this harbour in which Governor Phillip has fixed his residence, there are many spots of tolerably good land, but they are in general of but small extent; exclusive of those particular spots, it is rather a poor sterile soil, full of stones; but near, and at the head of the harbour, there is a very considerable extent of tolerable land, and which may be cultivated without waiting for its being cleared of wood; for the trees stand very wide of

each other, and have no underwood: in short, the woods on the spot I am speaking of resemble a deer park, as much as if they had been intended for such a purpose, but the soil appears to me to be rather sandy and shallow, and will require much manure to improve it, which is here a very scarce article; however, there are people whose judgment may probably be better than mine, that think it good land; I confess that farming has never made any part of my studies. The 'grass upon it is about three feet high, very close and thick; probably farther back there may be very extensive tracts of this kind of country, but we, as yet, had no time to make very distant excursions into interior parts of this new world."

This was about eight months after they landed.

Captain

Captain Tench has given one of the latest histories of this settlement, IN HIS COMPLETE ACCOUNT OF THE SETTLEMENT AT PORT JACKSON, dated in his Journal November, 1790, in which he observes as follows of Sydney Cove,

“ Cultivation, on a public scale, has for sometime past been given up here, (Sydney) the crop of last year being so miserable, as to deter from farther experiment ; in consequence of which, the government farm is abandoned, and the people who were fixed on it, have been removed. Necessary public buildings advance fast ; an excellent storehouse, of large dimensions, built of bricks, and covered with tiles, is just completed, and another planned, which will shortly be begun. Other buildings, among which I heard the governor mention an hospital, and permanent barracks for the troops, may also be expected to arise soon. Works
of

of this nature are more expeditiously performed than heretofore, owing, I apprehend, to the superintendants lately arrived, who are placed over the convicts, and compel them to labour. The first difficulties of a new country being subdued, may also contribute to this comparative difficulty.

“Vegetables are scarce, although the summer is far advanced, owing to want of rain. I do not think that all the showers of the last four months put together, would make twenty-four hours rain. Our farms, what with this, and a poor soil, are in wretched condition. My winter crop of potatoes, which I planted in days of despair, (March and April last) turned out very badly, when I dug them about two months back. Wheat returned so poorly last harvest, that very little, besides Indian corn, has been sown this year. The Governor's wound is quite healed, and he feels no inconveniency whatever from it. With the natives we are hand and glove. They throng the camp every day, and sometimes
by

by their clamour and importunity for bread and meat (of which they now all eat greedily) are become very troublesome. God knows, we have little enough for ourselves ! Full allowance (if eight pounds of flour, and either seven pounds of beef, or four pounds of pork, served alternately, per week, without either pease, oatmeal, spirits, butter, or cheese, can be called so) is yet kept up ; but if the Dutch snow does not arrive soon it must be shortened, as the casks in the storehouse, I observed yesterday, are woefully decreased."

Tench's Complete Account, &c. p. 73, 74.

Rose-Hill, or Paramatta, is the principal settlement, Captain Hunter remarks,

“ After my arrival at Port Jackson, I went to Rose-Hill, where great improvements are carrying on ; a considerable town was laid out, many good buildings were erected, and roads were cut, with about two hundred and thirteen acres of land cleared for corn, and eighty acres for buildings and gardens ; that is, the trees were cut down, but the roots remained in the ground, which would certainly lessen the quantity of cleared ground ; this ground being grubbed up and laid open, gave me an opportunity of examining what the soil consisted of, and although I do not pretend to any knowledge in farming, yet I thought it required no very great judgment to perceive and determine this favourite spot (which, to do it justice, is certainly better than any upon or near this harbour) to be a poor, sandy, steril soil ; the surface is covered

covered a few inches deep with a soil, which seems to be produced from decayed vegetation, rotten leaves, burnt and withered grafs; and under that is a mere bed of sand.

“ Rose-Hill is certainly a pretty situation, but the country will require much manure, much dressing, and good farmers to manage it, before good crops can be expected from it; the best they have ever had, I have been informed, has amounted only to six or seven to one, and this last season has been little more than two to one, but that may in some measure be accounted for by there being a great scarcity of rain.

“ If it be the determination of Government to persevere in establishing a settlement in this country upon an extensive plan, the nation must be contented to submit to a very heavy expence. It must be stocked with cattle, were it only for the manure, for without manure this
 D country

country is too poor ever to yield tolerable crops ; and if it should be resolved upon to stock it with cattle, it will be found highly necessary to employ a considerable number of people in the care of them, to prevent their being frequently attacked by the natives, whom we know are frequently driven to very great distress for food."

Historical Account, &c. page 101, 102.

Lieutenant King in his account of the transactions at Norfolk Island, in April 1788, observes as follows :

" The wheat, which was sown in the garden ground on the 2d was entirely eat up with rats by the 4th ; they did not leave a single grain in the ground. As I had no cats, and only one dog, these vermin were likely to prove a serious nuisance ;

fance ; however, in order to rid ourselves of them as much as possible, I carried all the empty casks to be converted into traps,"

Hunter's Historical Journal, page 306.

Lieut. King adds, p. 311. " We now had two formidable enemies to encounter in the rat and grub-worm, both which were very numerous and destructive : some wheat had been sown in the garden ground on the 11th, and the next morning there was not a grain of it left, being all eat up by the rats ; and the few potatoes and other vegetables, which escaped the bad effects of the southerly wind, were all eat up by the grub-worm. I have before observed, that on our first discovering the rats to be numerous, I ordered the empty casks to be converted into traps, and for some time they were very successful ; thirty or forty rats being caught for several nights together : these were killed and scattered about the gardens, to deter the

rest from coming to the place ; but they soon grew too cunning to be caught in the traps, and too bold to be intimidated by their dead companions." The grain met with similar fate in June. Out of six ewes, that Lieutenant King brought to the island, five died with the scab. There are no animals in the island, but rats ; and these, he observes, are very destructive, and very numerous. He, however, says, they are now much thinned, and gave it as his opinion, in 1788, that they would be capable of supporting themselves in two years.

In Captain Tench's JOURNAL are to be read the following particulars :

“ April 1791. Notwithstanding the supplies which had recently arrived from Batavia, short allowance was again proclaimed on the 2d of April, on which day we were reduced to the following ration :

“ Three pounds of rice, three pounds of flour, and three pounds of pork, per week.

“ It was singularly unfortunate that these retrenchments should always happen when the gardens were most destitute of vegetables. A long drought had nearly exhausted them. The hardships which we in consequence suffered were great, but not comparable to what had been formerly experienced. Besides, now we made sure of ships arriving soon to dispel our distress : whereas, heretofore, from having never heard from England, the hearts of men
funk ;

funk ; and many had begun to doubt whether it had not been resolved to try how long misery might be endured with resignation.

“ Notwithstanding the incompetency of so diminished a pittance, the daily task of the soldier and convict continued unaltered. I never contemplated the labours of these men, without finding abundant cause of reflection on the miseries which our nature can overcome. Let me for a moment quit the cold tract of narrative :—let me not fritter away by servile adaptations those reflections, and the feelings they gave birth to :—let me transcribe them fresh as they arose, ardent and generous, though hopeless and romantic.—I every day see wretches pale with disease, and wasted with famine, struggle against the horrors of their situation. How striking is the effect of subordination ! how dreadful is the fear of punishment !—The allotted task is still performed, even on the present reduced subsistence :—The
black.

blacksmith sweats at the sultry forge ; the sawyer labours pent up in his pit, and the husbandman turns up the sterile glebe.— Shall I again hear arguments multiplied to violate truth and insult humanity !— Shall I again be told that the sufferings of the wretched Africans are indispensable for the culture of our sugar colonies : that white men are incapable of sustaining the heat of the climate !—I have been in the West Indies :—I have lived there. I know that it is a rare instance, for the mercury in the thermometer to mount there above 90° ; and here I scarcely pass a week in summer without seeing it rise to 100° : sometimes to 105 ; nay, beyond even that burning altitude.

“ Buttoil cannot be long supported without adequate refreshment. The first step in every community, which wishes to preserve honesty, should be to set the people above want. The throes of hunger will ever prove too powerful for integrity to withstand : hence arose a repetition of
petty

petty delinquences, which no vigilance could detect, and no justice reach. Gardens were plundered ; provisions pilfered ; and the Indian corn stolen from the fields, where it grew for public use. Various were the measures adopted to check this depredatory spirit. Criminal courts, either from the tediousness of their process, or from the frequent escape of culprits from their decision, were seldomer convened than formerly. The Governor ordered convict offenders either to be chained together, or to wear singly a large iron collar, with two spikes projecting from it which effectually hindered the party from concealing it under his shirt : and thus shackled, they were compelled to perform their quota of work."

" Complete Account, p. 108, &c,

In the month of January, 1790, that is about two years after their arrival at Botany Bay, Captain Hunter gives the following awful relation :

" In

“ In every company, the conversation turned upon the long expected arrivals from England, which we had been for some time past in daily expectation of, with a supply of provisions; our store here was now in a very exhausted state, much more so than we ever expected it would have been; for it was the general opinion, that I should the last year, on my arrival at the Cape of Good Hope, have there met with store-ships bound to this country, as it was always understood that the settlement would never have been reduced lower than one year's provisions in store.

“ We landed in the country with two years provisions, at least with what was supposed, when we sailed from England, would be the case; that time was now elapsed, yet we had not been visited by any ships from Europe, and we still had remaining provisions at half allowance to last until June. We all looked forward with hope for arrivals with a relief; and that every assistance necessary for strangers

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might be at hand, I offered, with a few men from the Sirius, to go down to the south head of the harbour, there to build a lookout-house, and erect a flag-staff upon the height, which might be seen from the sea; and which might also communicate information of ships in the offing to the Governor at Sydney Cove. The Governor approved my proposals. I went down with six men, and was accompanied by Mr. White and Mr. Worgan the surgeons of the settlement and Sirius. We erected a flag-staff, and lived in a tent for ten days, in which we compleated a tolerably good house. At the end of ten days, I was relieved by Mr. Bradley with a fresh party."

Hist. Acc. p. 169, 170.

In chap. vii. p. 171, this narrative is thus continued;

" In February, we began to look a little serious on our disappointment of arrivals:

vals: we had not now more than provisions till June, at the allowance I have already mentioned.

“ The Governor now saw a necessity for dividing the settlement, and signified his intention that such division should take place soon, by sending a certain number of marines and convicts, under the command of Major Ross, the Lieutenant-governor, to Norfolk Island; at which place he understood there were many resources, which Port Jackson, or the country round it did not afford; and the gardens and cultivated lands here also would then be more enjoyed by the remaining numbers: accordingly an arrangement took place, and on the 26th of February, I received an order to prepare the *Sirius* for the sea, and to embark the Lieutenant-governor with one company of marines, and the officers, baggage, and 186 convicts; in all, 221 persons; with such a proportion of the remaining provisions and other stores, as the settlement at that time could furnish; and

I was directed to land them upon Norfolk Island: Lieutenant Ball, commander of his Majesty's armed tender Supply, was ordered under my command, and he also embarked a company of marines, and twenty convicts.

“ In consequence of this deplorable situation, on the 14th of May, the Officers composing the council met the Lieutenant-governor, agreeable to appointment, and published the following orders:”—‘ At
 ‘ a meeting of the governor and council
 ‘ held to consider of the very exhausted
 ‘ state of the provisions in this settlement,
 ‘ and to consult upon what means are
 ‘ most proper to be pursued, in order to
 ‘ preserve life until such time as we may
 ‘ be relieved by some arrivals from England,
 ‘ of which we have been so long
 ‘ in expectation, but probably disappointed
 ‘ by some unfortunate accident having
 ‘ happened to the ships intended for this
 ‘ country. The state of the provisions
 ‘ having been laid before the council, and
 ‘ the

‘ the alarming situation of the settlement
 ‘ having been taken into the most serious
 ‘ consideration, the following ratio of pro-
 ‘ visions was unanimously resolved and or-
 ‘ dered to take place on Saturday the 15th
 ‘ instant, viz.

‘ Flour—three pounds per week, for
 ‘ every grown person.

‘ Beef—one pound and an half per ditto ;
 ‘ or, in lieu of the beef, 17 ounces of
 ‘ pork.

‘ Rice—one pound per ditto.

‘ Children above twelve months old,
 ‘ half the above ratio. Children under
 ‘ twelve months old, one pound and an
 ‘ half of flour and a pound of rice per
 ‘ week. In future, all crimes which may
 ‘ by any three Members of the council be
 ‘ considered as not of a capital nature,
 ‘ will be punished at their discretion, by
 ‘ a farther

‘ a farther reduction of the present allowance of provisions.’

“ At this particular season we had one advantage, which, when that leaves us, will reduce us to very great distress; I think, then, that many of the convicts (who are indolent to astonishment, and who can, and frequently do, eat at one meal what they are allowed for a week) must, when the resource I am going to mention fails, PERISH FOR WANT, OR SUFFER DEATH FOR THE DEPREDATIONS THEY ARE SO MUCH INCLINED, EVEN IN TIMES OF PLENTY, TO COMMIT UPON OTHERS.”

In Norfolk Island is a bird, called, from its singular advantage, the Bird of Providence: but this singular advantage can only be enjoyed for a season: fish, too, as well as the tropic birds and gannets, cannot be depended upon as a certain resource. Of the fish, Captain Hunter says, page 183. “ I have seen the weather so stormy, and the surf so high for
near

near a month together; that a boat could not be launched more than twice during that period, and then only for a few hours; and even when they had got out, they would sometimes bring in a hundred fish of from two to four pounds weight, and at other times only five or six fish; so that this supply was very uncertain and very trifling, when it was considered that we were above 500 people."

Much having been said concerning the great fertility of Norfolk Island, I would just observe, that let its fertility be what it may, its extent is very small: and if cultivation should even answer the expectations of Lieutenant King as expressed to Governor Phillip, it would probably be only capable of supporting the persons themselves who reside there. I think it is only five miles in breadth, and three in length. I have been informed, too, that in Norfolk Island there are two harvests in the year; that the ground never lies fallow; and that
there

there is great want of manure : If so, the strength of this land must be soon exhausted.

WHITE'S JOURNAL OF A VOYAGE TO NEW SOUTH WALES, relates more particularly to the natural productions of that country ; interspersed, however, are some useful remarks of another kind. In August 1788, he observes as follows : " The Supply arrived from Norfolk Island, after a long and rough passage. She had landed, but neither in apparent safety, nor with facility, the stores which she carried to that place : and, upon the present occasion, I am sorry to add, that the hazard of landing and embarking from the little island is so very great, that Mr. Cunningham, a Midshipman of the *Sirius* (who resided on it with Lieutenant King, the Superintendent) was lost, with three seamen, in a boat that was swamped by the surf, which on every part of the coast runs high, and beats against the shore with great violence :

lence ; so that I much fear, from the difficulty of access, and its situation, it never will prove of any great consequence, although it promised some advantages, particularly in furnishing us with pine trees, which grow here to a size nearly equal to those of Norway. In the whole island there is not a harbour capable of admitting even so small a vessel as the Supply, and the anchorage on every part of the coast is equally bad." Page 211, 212.

From all that I have had time to collect, I cannot forbear making the following additional remarks.—The climate of Port Jackson is allowed to be very salubrious, though more favourable to the human constitution, than to vegetable or animal production. Of the soil it has been observed, " that a spot eminently fruitful has never yet been found ; that there are spots cursed with everlasting and unconquerable sterility, no body can deny." The

traveller looks in vain for those chearing springs, that bless more fertile countries; the stream of Sydney is said to be a mere drain of a morass; and the river, as it is called, at Paramatta, a creek, scarcely entitled to the name of a brook. The Hawkesbury or Nepean is the only fresh water river yet known to exist in this country. It is, however, unreasonable to conclude, that in such extensive regions, there should not be found some tracts of country, which, by proper cultivation, may become fruitful.

But with respect to the present state of things, if the reader survey Port Jackson in the maps of Captains Hunter or Tench, he will perceive, that on the North it is separated from Broken Bay, on the South from Botany; and that all the land between those bays, except a small portion called the Kangaroo ground, is, at present, described as either sandy, swampy, or rocky, which have hitherto mocked labour, and defeated cultivation. The land
between

between Paramatta and that spot, where the overflowings of the Hawkesbury cease, is the only tract yet discovered, in which cultivation can be ensured for any course of years. The calculations and probabilities, therefore, to be made from length of time, improvements in husbandry, increase of labour, and of expence, still remain to be realized: the difficulties, too, and cost attending this system of colonization, must be very considerable. I have heard from gentlemen, who ought to be, and I doubt not are, well informed on the subject, that every convict transported to New South Wales, has cost government, on an average, a thousand pounds. A rich and flourishing people, indeed, may well afford to make a costly experiment, and should turn a deaf ear to the cold speculatist, who would warn them against ploughing in the sea, and reaping despair !

But I cannot persuade myself yet to lay down my pen. From the whole of

the preceding remarks it is evident, that these distant colonies were not capable of supporting themselves, as low down as 1790, and 1791. By the extract from Thompson also it appears, that they could not support themselves in 1793: for he landed there in October 1792, and continued there, I think, about three months. They must then, of course, depend on supplies from Great Britain, Batavia, the Cape of Good Hope, or the East Indies. The voyage from Great Britain is made sometimes in five months, often in six, seven, or even eight months. Capt. Hunter went from Port Jackson to the Cape of Good Hope by Cape Horn, and returned in 219 days, after a very perilous voyage round the world, and was very near being lost. The western course from Van Dieman's Land to the Cape has never yet been tried, and would, probably, from the strong westerly winds, prove a very long and tedious voyage. From the preceding observations, too, it appears, that two vessels

have

have actually been wrecked *. At the situation of persons, whose very existence is at the mercy of winds and seas, whose supplies depend on the wafting of a single blast, on the safe arrival of a single vessel, I cannot help feeling alarm ! Whether, indeed, any ships are regularly stationed on these barren coasts I am not certain. If this has not been, at any time, the case, (and I have heard this asserted) government should at least provide in future.

It will, perhaps, be thought by some readers, that I have presented them with an inaccurate picture of New South Wales. The picture may be dark, I acknowledge ; but it is, I believe, not inaccurate. Since I have engaged in this inquiry, I have employed myself night and day to collect authentic information from books ; and I have studied precision. The picture, therefore, which I have drawn, I venture to say, is

* The Sirius near Norfolk Island, and the Guardian Frigate on her passage from England.

a true

a true representation : and when I consider this new world as the future abode of my worthy friend, placed in a situation, at which the heart of man revolts, a person of approved virtue, and of sincere religion, possessed of such talents, and of such attainments, as eminently qualify him to be the ornament and comfort of civilized life ; when I consider these things, I say, I am not likely, it may be supposed, to search for the concealed delights of New South Wales, or to decorate a picture, in itself unpleasant, with the embellishments of invention. Nor is my imagination to be quickened, when I consider the state of others ; when passing from a consideration of the present sufferers, I take a general survey of the subject ; when I recollect on what slender crimes this dreadful sentence of transportation frequently attends ; that the new settlements are to be considered not merely as the land of slavery, but as the bourn, from whence scarcely any convicts have returned. No provision, I am told, is made for the return of convicts ;
and

and the passage, if I recollect rightly, costs about twenty pounds.

Concerning the policy of settling a new Colony with convicts, I shall say but little. Lord Bacon * observes, " it is a shameful and unblest thing to take the scum of people, and wicked condemned men, to be the people with whom you plant ; and not only so, but it spoileth the plantation : for they will ever look like rogues, and not fall to work, but be lazy, and do mischief, and spend victuals, and be quickly weary, and then certify over to their country, to the discredit of the plantation.

" The people, wherewith you plant ought to be gardeners, ploughmen, labourers, smiths, carpenters, joiners, fishermen, fowlers, with some few apothecaries, cooks, and bakers."

Whenever I have heard this question agitated, says Captain Tench, since my

* Chancellor Bacon's Essays, p. 33. Of Plantations:
return

return to England, the cry of, What can we do with them? Where else can they be sent? has silenced me, p. 163.

I have read with attention that part of governor Phillip's voyage, which treats on this subject: I went to be informed—I came away unconvinced.—To point out the defect of our penal laws; the utility of penitentiary houses; the yet uncultivated state of our northern Isles; the unexplored mines said to be in Britain; the prudence of converting our waste lands into national property; and of furnishing means, by which those who have heretofore been injurious to their country, may henceforth be rendered beneficial, would to many appear romantic, and to me, would, at present, be tedious. The die is cast, and in playing a hazardous game, it is deemed prudent not to be too nice in calculations, or too apprehensive about consequences.—Let me, however, at least, lift a warning voice, and remind an untoward class of readers of the title page of

of this book *. FAMINE AND SLAVERY,
THE PUNISHMENT FOR SEDITION.

But doubtless not only those who planned, but those who have been delegated to execute an enterprize of such magnitude, have deeply revolved that great national expence does not imply the necessity of national suffering. While revenue is employed with success to some valuable end the profits of every adventure being more than sufficient to repay its costs, the public should gain, and its resources should multiply.—But an expence whether sustained at home or abroad ; whether a waste of the present, or an anticipation of the future revenue ; if it bring no adequate return, is to be reckoned among the causes of national ruin †."

* For the title page I am indebted to a friend.

† Ferguson's Essay on the History of Civil Society, quoted by Capt. Trench.

POSTSCRIPT.

AS the small sketch drawn above, was
I own, the effect of sympathetic
friendship, it will not be thought out of
character to drop a word relative to my
friend. Thomas Fysche Palmer, B. D. late
senior Fellow of Queen's College, Cam-
bridge, is of a respectable and ancient family
at Ickwell, in Bedfordshire ; was educated
at Eton School ; was entered at Queen's
College, Cambridge, and, after going
through the studies of the University with
credit, was chosen Fellow of that College.
He was ordained a clergyman of the esta-
blished

blished church, and from the nature of his connections, as well as the direction of his studies, must have had prospects of considerable preferment.

At Cambridge, Fysche Palmer was a regular attendant on the Theological Lectures of the late celebrated John Jebb, though antecedently to this connection, he had been of the calvinistic persuasion, intimate with John Berridge and Rowland Hill, two eminent methodist preachers of the established church. From an assiduous and critical study of the scriptures he became an unitarian, and possessing great activity of mind, he then shewed the same zeal in propagating the unitarian, as he had before the trinitarian doctrines. He never held any preferment.

Hearing of a society of unitarians formed at Montrose by Thomas Christie, author of an excellent volume of Sermons on the unity, Fysche Palmer was induced to

go to Scotland, with a view of joining that society. There he became a zealous teacher, formed unitarian societies at Dundee and Edinburgh, and taught occasionally in several villages, particularly, in Forfar, and Newborough. He never received any pay : The employment of a teacher he thought honourable, and useful ; but had long since laid aside the profession and garb of a priest.

Of his income derived from his fellowship and private fortune he devoted more than half to benevolent purposes : he was a great economist, only to enable himself to be a philanthropist.

The regulations of the societies in which F. Palmer taught were different from that in many others. When I was lamenting in his company the loss which his society would sustain, he replied, “ my friends will feel little inconvenience from my absence ; they did not depend wholly on me ; they will

will be capable of instructing one another."

James Ellis, the young man gone with him to Botany Bay, was formerly his servant ; but proving himself to be a youth of virtuous principles, and good talents, F. Palmer took pains in giving him instruction ; and made him his companion. James Ellis used to preach for him occasionally.

F. Palmer is not merely a man of letters : he is a man of exquisite taste in the fine arts, in painting, poetry and music, and possesses an excellent judgment in architecture, gardening and husbandry. In the cast of his mind there is great originality. He can be as serious as any man ; but he is likewise a master of humour. I know no character more upright ; few more interesting. There will be shortly published, by a skilful hand, a more ample account of this gentleman, together with
his

his Essays written in the Theological Repository, and a Controversial Treatise of his, published some time since, on the Unity of God.—To say more concerning his religious sentiments would be quite foreign to the nature of this Work, nor should I; indeed, have even touched on that subject here, but with a view to exhibit the real character of my friend.

With respect to the other gentlemen, not being possessed of much original information, I can say but little: To the abilities, learning, and worth of Thomas Muir, all who have the pleasure of his acquaintance can bear testimony. He was educated at the University of Glasgow, in Scotland; and from his distinguished talents would probably have been very eminent as an advocate. The other gentlemen are possessed of respectable talents; and few worthier characters, I am told are to be found, than William Skirving.—

The

The proceedings on these trials have been thought illegal by some of our first lawyers: the sentences, therefore, will be, probably rejudged by posterity; and when the sentences passed by the Scotch judges are approved, the humanity of Henry Dundas will not be forgotten.

O D E,

'MIDST howling winds, and foaming deeps,
No fear the guiltless sufferer knows;
Peaceful amidst the storm he sleeps,
Fearless to unknown regions goes.

The guilt that makes e'en tyrants groan,
Dares not invade the patriots breast;
The prisoner feels himself his own,
And triumph's most, when most oppress'd.

The bark that bears to barren lands
And barb'rous tribes a prize so dear,
Shall keep it safe from ruffian hands,
Or yield it to a nation's prayer.

Go, generous band, where honour calls,
Your chains are virtue's fairest prize,
Who nobly lives, and nobly falls
Stands but a step below the skies.

And thou, pure heart, shalt often send
The ardent prayer to heaven for me:
And grateful still I call thee friend,
And chearful would I follow thee.

EXTRACT

FROM THE

JOURNAL OF G. THOMPSON.

THE land of New South Wales, from Botany Bay to Port Jackson, has a level appearance at first sight, and may be seen at about the distance of seven or eight leagues. As you come nearer, it appears hilly up the country, and full of trees. The entrance of the harbour is formed by two heads, called the North and South Heads, lying nearly in those directions, and

about three quarters of a mile distant from each other. Just within the Heads, and in the middle of the harbour, is a shoal, with about four fathom water upon it at spring ebbs ; in the channel about fifteen fathom ; it gradually shoals as you get farther up. The whole abounds with islands, coves, creeks, and harbours, up to Sydney, which is about nine* miles from the entrance, and makes the most complete harbour in the universe : there your ships lay within fifty yards of the shore, in five fathom and a half, and as smooth as in a fish-pond. From Sydney Cove the harbour takes its course to Rose Hill (or Parramatta). There is water up at low water for a large long boat ; the tide flows about eight feet at neap tides, and ten feet at the spring, with very little strength.

* Governor Phillip makes Sydney Cove about five or six miles from the entrance into the harbour ; the harbour also must be more than three quarters of a mile across, according to Phillip and White ; in other respects Thompson's account agrees tolerably well with theirs.

The

The harbour abounds with a variety of fish, most of them unknown in England ; here is plenty of oysters, cockles, and other shell fish. The best fish that are caught are snappers, mullets, light-horseman, (so called from their head resembling much a light-horseman's cap) flat-heads, salmon, whittings, and there are many other kinds of fish too tedious to mention.

Sydney is the spot where the first settlement was formed, merely for the advantage of good water, and the conveniency of the harbour. In this part are only gardens sufficient to supply the inhabitants with vegetables, &c. The Governor and principal officers chiefly reside here, and as many convicts as are sufficient to attend the store-houses, fishing-boats, different officers, &c. Those whose sentence is expired and are in expectation of getting home *, chiefly choose this place for their residence.

* None worth mentioning have ever returned.

About two miles from this place are the brick fields, where a great number of bricks and tiles have been lately made, but they are still in great want of lime-stone, or a substitute for it. At present a stiff kind of clay is used to build with, but it is such a weak cement they dare not attempt to raise their houses even one story. There is not such a thing on the colony as a set of stairs, except in the Governor's house, which is only one story, and is built with lime brought from England. The bricks and tiles are both of one colour, of a light brown, which make the buildings quite romantic. Those that are built of wood are white-washed with pipe clay, which is found here in great plenty,

Parramatta is the grand settlement, about sixteen miles from Sydney by land, the buildings are the same as at that place, forming one large street, nearly one mile long. The houses are all separate from one another, space being left to enlarge them
when

when necessary. There is a large hospital, church, store-houses, &c. The Governor has a house here upon Rose Hill, a most delightful spot ; here is a large park, called Cumberland Park, where the government cattle are put to graze : the greatest part of the cattle and sheep belonging to different people are at this place. There is at present about 100 acres of corn standing here, chiefly Indian corn, some wheat, oats, barley, &c. They look remarkably well, and there is not the least doubt of its being the most fruitful harvest the colony has ever experienced. It will commence in about eight or ten weeks.

About four miles from this place is another settlement, Toongabby, where the greatest number of convicts are, and work very hard, (there is also a good crop of corn standing and promises well) their hours for work are from five in the morning till eleven *, they then leave off till two in the afternoon, and work from that time till sun-

* Capt. Tench says till ten.

set. They are allowed no breakfast hour, because they have seldom any thing to eat. Their labour is felling trees, digging up the stumps*, rooting up the shrubs and grass, turning up the ground with spades or hoes, and carrying the timber to convenient places. From the heat of the sun, the short allowance of provision, and the ill treatment they receive from a set of merciless wretches (most of them of their own description) who are their superintendants, their lives are rendered truly miserable. At night they are placed in a hut, perhaps 14, 16, or 18 together (with one woman, whose duty is to keep it clean, and provide victuals for the men while at work) without the comforts of either beds or blankets, unless they take them from the ship they come out in, or are rich enough to purchase them when they come on shore. They have neither bowl, plate, spoon, or

* This may, perhaps, be done now; but when Capt. Tench was there, it is observed in his Journal, Nov. 16, 1790, "As all the trees on our cleared ground, were cut down, and not grubbed up, the roots and stumps remain,"

knife,

knife, but what they make of the green wood of this country : only one small iron pot being allowed to dress their poor allowance of meat, rice, &c. In short, all the necessary conveniences of life they are strangers to, and suffer every thing they could dread in their sentence of transportation. Some time since, it was not uncommon for seven or eight to die in one day, and very often while at work, they being kept in the field till the last moment, and frequently while being carried to the hospital ; many a one has died standing at the door of the store-house, waiting for his allowance of provision, merely for want of sustenance and necessary food. So great was the mortality among them that upwards of *died in one year* ; and of 450 that came from England in the Pitt *, only 29 were alive six weeks since at a general muster. Those that are now living chiefly

* The Pitt sailed in May 1791, and returned in 1793.—I think I have heard that some of these convicts went to Norfolk Island ; and ought to be deducted from this account.

owe their lives to those that are dead, the provision being so scarce, that had they not died all must have perished. When our ship arrived (which was quite unexpected) there was no more than one week's salt provision in the store at the full allowance, which would have been reduced to one-third on the following week.

The women have a more comfortable life than the men ; those who are not fortunate enough to be selected for wives, (which every officer, settler, and soldier is entitled to, and few are without) are made hut-keepers : those who are not dignified with this office, are set to make shirts, frocks, trowsers, &c. for the men, at a certain number per day ; occasionally to pick grass in the fields, and for a very slight offence are kept constantly at work the same as the men. It is absolutely necessary to keep a strict discipline among such people, and their punishments are very severe. The colony is by no means without good laws and officers of justice ;
there

there is a judge, justice of the peace, and constables, most of the latter are convicts. At this time Barrington holds the post of head constable at Parramatta, and is a very diligent officer. For a very trifling offence a convict is put into the stocks until it is convenient to examine him; if guilty, he is taken to a cart wheel to receive a Botany Bay dozen, which is twenty-five lashes; if the crime is such as would be punished by a dozen on board a ship, or on shore in England, it is here punished with two or three hundred; if it is any thing of consequence, such as theft, they are tried by a regular court, which generally terminates in a sentence of death, or a second transportation to Norfolk Island for life. At the same time the convicts have the advantage of the laws as well as others. No person, unless those immediately concerned with them, is allowed to strike them, or by any means ill use them; all complaints must be made to the justice, who must be consulted on the most trifling occasion.

The natives of New South Wales are not very numerous* : towards the sea coast they are quite black, of the middle size, and in general well limbed, have large flat noses, thick lips, and short hair, not of the woolly kind like the African negroes. They are a lazy indolent people and of no ingenuity. They never even think of seeking for food till hunger presses them ; their chief living is fish, which they catch with a hook and line, or with a fish gig made of wood and sharpened with fish bones or kangaroo teeth ; they have no other method of cooking but roasting the fish on the fire, which is generally done as soon as they get them out of the water : and they are frequently so hungry as not to allow themselves time to dress them, but eat them half raw : they commonly fish and eat till they can scarcely move † ; they then

go

* Capt. Hunter seems to intimate they are numerous ; though I think by his own Historical Journal it appears that they are not so, as well as from the Accounts of others.

† Capt. Tench observes of Colbee, "that a large dish
of

go on shore, make a fire, and lay down to sleep by the side of it. They have no kind of cloathing; both men and women are always naked: if it rains they fly to some hollow rock or cavern for shelter: if it is fine, they just pull up some long grass, make a fire, dry it and go to sleep on it. They cannot bear to be confined to a hut or tent. The Governor has built a very neat brick hut for one of the Chiefs, but neither he or his family will live in it: they will sometimes stay at the place for a day, then make a fire on the outside of it. In short, they prefer living in the woods and going naked to the best house or clothes on the Colony. There are many of them that visit Sydney every day for the sake of what they can get to eat, and at night they return to the woods. There are three or four of the Chiefs who attend the Governor's house every day for their dinner and a glass of wine. Several of the

of fish was set before him: he devoured a *light horseman*, and at least five pounds of beef and bread, even till the sight of food became disgusting to him, p. 97.

officers have both boys and girls as servants, but they are so lazy that it is with difficulty you can persuade them to get themselves a drink of water: if you attempt to strike them, they will immediately set out for the woods and stay four or five days. Indeed it is common for them to strip off what clothes they may have on, and take a trip to the woods, whether offended or not. If they were shy at the first settling in the Colony, that is not the case now. For the people can scarcely keep them out of their houses in day time; at the same time, they must be cautious how they affront them; if they offend them, at the first opportunity they will certainly spear them, at which they are very dexterous*. Their spears are made of the stem of the grass tree, are about twelve or fourteen feet long, pointed with fish bone or teeth, and bearded with shells, stuck on with gum, and are very

* In 1790 Governor Phillip observes, that no less than seventeen of our people had either been killed or wounded by their spears,

dangerous

dangerous weapons; they will throw them fifty or sixty yards*, and strike within two or three inches at a certainty; they are very treacherous and deceiving: if they chance to meet any person in the woods singly, it is ten to one but they spear him and strip him of his clothes, though of no use to them; if there are two or three together, they will not attempt to assault them, particularly if they have a musket, at which they are much frightened: few people travel the woods without one. Some time since one of them speared the Governor quite through the shoulder from near the back bone to the neck, which went through above five inches. He had one of their Chiefs with him at his house sometime, and fearing he would go away, had made him a prisoner: however, he made his escape; the Governor hearing where he went, next day went about seven miles from Sydney and found him and se-

* He might have said 60 or 70: Capt. Hunter says, I have since seen a strong young man throw the lance full ninety yards.

veral more together ; to convince them he did not intend them any harm, he went to them by himself, and while he was expostulating with this Chief, and intreating him to return, one of them who was behind, struck him with the spear and ran away to the woods : but he suffered severely for the offence, as soon as he was found by the rest, they beat him in a most unmerciful manner, knocked one of his eyes out, and nearly deprived him of life. While the Governor was carried home with the spear in his shoulder, which, however, was not attended with any bad consequence, in less than three weeks he was able to walk out ; they are divided into several tribes or casts, and are known to which they belong by the loss of one of their fore teeth, or the joint of their fore or little finger * ; they have frequent wars and desperate battles with each other at fixed times ; whenever a dispute arises be-

* This seems probable. Captains Hunter and Tench observe, that as yet they had not been able to discover the cause of these defects.

twcen

tween them that causes a fight, they name a certain day and fix a place to meet for the engagement : every one is armed with his spear, a large club, stone hatchet and a shield ; they are at great pains to paint themselves and make the most terrible appearance they can at those times ; those who fall in the battle are left lying on the ground, without any more notice, except it be a Chief or some one much respected : then they cover him with wood, set fire to it until the flesh is burnt from the bones, and in this state they leave it. Those that die naturally are not buried, but are left where they die, unless they be of note, then they are burnt ; they cannot bear the idea of dying by a natural death, which is indeed seldom the case, their frequent wars not suffering them to live to a great age ; the oldest that I remember to have seen, did not to appearance exceed thirty years *. If one of a family dies, they generally put

* Though in general they are not long lived, yet some are known to live till fifty or sixty years of age.

one or more of the survivors to death, and a family of eight or nine has been often known to be reduced to two or three in the course of a month ; these two causes prevent their being numerous. They are very quick in learning to speak English, and will repeat any sentence after you immediately, particularly any tune : when in their canoes they keep constantly singing while they paddle along ; they have the French tune of Malbrook very perfect : I have heard a dozen or twenty singing it together.

The different kinds of beasts, birds and insects are numerous, and the birds in general are very beautiful : there is a great variety of different sorts of parrots, parrotts, and many other birds unknown in England, a great many insects also, which are very troublesome and destructive, one in particular that in the hot dry season destroys the corn : these have been known to overspread a field of corn in the course of one night, and totally destroy

stroy it. The musquittoes and flies are in great quantities: the latter will infect fresh meat in such a manner that it is sometimes difficult to keep it free from maggots even one hour after it is killed. Of the beasts the kangaroo is found to be the best eating, exactly resembling venison; they are sometimes shot and sometimes taken with dogs: in dry weather it is difficult to get them any way, owing to their swiftness in leaping; but in rainy and wet weather they are easily caught or shot; they often wound the dogs in a desperate manner with their tail, with which they strike with great force: they grow very slowly and are near two years before they come to their full size, and then they will weigh about 2 cwt.* they have a false belly in which they secure their young when pursued, and commonly carry them till they are five or six months old. There are a great many opossums and flying squirrels which are good eating. Guanas,

* This circumstance is worth mentioning, that at its birth, the kangaroo is not so large as a full grown mouse.

D

snakes,

snakes, &c. are very plentiful; there are also some of the finest dogs wild in the woods, and many other kind of beasts, but none of them in the least dangerous.

The trees with which the whole country abounds are found to be of little use, not fit either for building houses or boats, though there are many boats built with them, but they will not last long, and likewise houses, for necessity has no law. There are two kinds of oak, called the he and the she oak, but not to be compared with English oak; and a kind of pine and mahogany, so heavy that scarce either of them will swim. Some distance up the country the trees grow very strait, and to a great height, though not one in a hundred are found. As an instance, when the Supply was ordered for England, she wanted a new foremast, and to find one to answer such a small ship, it cost them upwards of three weeks labour, in which time they cut down more than thirty trees, before one was found to be found at the heart,
and

and this of such a weight, it was with difficulty they moved and erected it; there are trees which produce two sorts of gum, a yellow kind which the natives make use of for their spears, fish gigs and canoes; and a kind which is called dragon's blood, but they are of no use but for the fire.

Here ends the ingenious narrative of Geo. Thompson, written, indeed, without any view to publication; the observations, however, of a person, to whom the officers on board the vessel* bear testimony, that his veracity may be depended on.

As an illustration of some reflections in my Preliminary Remarks on the severe sentences inflicted for slight offences, I beg leave to subjoin the following hints.

A person in Kent about ten years ago, lent a farmer a team of horses, and sent a

* The Stanislaus hulk.

servant with them. The horses were worked hard, and had nothing to eat. The servant took some corn out of a bin, to feed them with: this man was sentenced at Maidstone Assizes to seven years transportation, and is, I believe, now at Botany Bay.

Edward Mosely was condemned by Judge Gould at Maidstone in 1792, for stealing a game cock, to seven years transportation: he is now on board the Staniffaus, unless gone with the other convicts in the Surprise.

On board the other hulks is, at least, was, when I visited the excellent Thomas Muir, a youth whose amiable deportment engaged the notice of the officers. A disciple of Lavater looking at his countenance, would have said, this youth cannot possess a vicious heart: he was observed to keep aloof from the other convicts, as not accustomed to their maxims, and when above deck, walked pensively

sively by himself; his crime I am informed was this: he had been in a squabble with a girl of the town, and whether in a frolic, which I think was the case, or not, he took her handkerchief: this was said not to be worth sixpence: it was, however, valued at eleven pence, in order to get a sentence fixed: the youth was adjudged to seven years transportation.

The following case reflects great honour on the humanity of Captain Erskine, of the Stanislaus hulk. A man in Cornwall stole a game cock, which was found in his father's custody. The Justices of the Quarter Sessions sent both father and son for three years hard labour on the hulks; the father died of a broken heart in a month. Captain Erskine wrote to the Secretary of State on the iniquity of the case. The son was pardoned.

Montrieul (Count) borrowed a sum of money of Broughton, (Sir Thomas) to go
to

to Ireland. Montrieul altered his intention and took another course. Broughton had him taken up for a swindler, and by the justices of Suffex he was sentenced to three years hard labour on the hulks,

Most of these cases I received from my benevolent friend : who in commiserating the severe sentences of others forgot the severity of his own,

In George Thompson's list of convicts consigned to New South Wales, on board the Royal Admiral in 1792, are the following : The reader will please to notice the age of the convict, and the term of conviction : Alexander Dempster, aged fifteen, labourer, received May 15, convicted Sept. 13, 1790, term of conviction seven years : Stephen Peachman, nineteen years of age, transported for life : William Collins, Thomas Galloway, and William Wales, each fifteen years of age, transported for seven : Ann Wilson, eighteen

teen years of age : Ann Holmes only sixteen, transported for life : and — Scott, only thirteen years of age, (*quis talia fando temperet e lachrymis?*) TRANSPORTED FOR LIFE—!!

F I N I S.

ERRATUM.

Page 2 of Preliminary Remarks, for Pyche, read
Pyche.

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